

**MARVEL**

**5**


**MARK WAID**  
**JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**  
**WITH ÁLVARO LÓPEZ**

# HISTORY OF THE **MARVEL** UNIVERSE





# HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE



At the end of existence, Franklin Richards asked Galactus to tell him the story of their universe as they wait for its heat death. Galactus began with the first stirrings of life and left off with the discovery that the parallel Earth that the Avengers and the Fantastic Four had once found themselves on was created by none other than Franklin. Now, the story continues...

**MARK WAID** WRITER • **JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ** PENCILS/COLOR  
**ÁLVARO LÓPEZ** INKER • **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA** LETTERER

**STEVE McNIVEN, MARK FARMER & MORRY HOLLOWELL** COVER  
**JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ & ÁLVARO LÓPEZ** VARIANT COVER

**CARLOS LAO** DESIGNER • **SHANNON ANDREWS BALLESTEROS** ASST. EDITOR  
**ALANNA SMITH** ASSOCIATE EDITOR • **TOM BREVOORT** EDITOR

**JEFF CHRISTIANSEN, ANTHONY COTILLET, MIKE FICHERA, KEVIN GARCIA,  
DARON JENSEN, ROB LONDON, CHRIS McCARVER, MIKE O'SULLIVAN,  
JACOB ROUGEMONT, STUART VANDAL, BRIAN OVERTON** RESEARCH TEAM

**C.B. CEBULSKI** EDITOR IN CHIEF • **JOE QUESADA** CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER  
**DAN BUCKLEY** PRESIDENT • **ALAN FINE** EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

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THAT'S US,  
FRANKLIN  
RICHARDS AND  
GALACTUS, THE  
WORLD BUILDER  
AND THE WORLD  
DESTROYER.

SO POWERFUL  
HAD YOU BECOME  
THAT THE CELESTIALS  
TOOK DIRECT  
NOTICE.

THEY WOULDN'T  
SAY, BUT I ALWAYS  
SUSPECTED THAT WAS  
OUT OF JEALOUSY. THEY  
DEMANDED I DESTROY  
MY LITTLE POCKET  
WORLD.

PETULANT  
BABIES.

I TAUGHT THEM  
A LITTLE HUMAN  
PERSPECTIVE, AND  
THEY BACKED OFF  
ONCE I BROUGHT  
EVERYBODY HOME.

WHETHER  
ENVIOUS OR NOT,  
THEY KNEW THE TRUTH:  
YOUR POWER TO CREATE  
REALITIES WAS  
BOUNDLESS.


AND,  
TO BE FAIR,  
SPORADIC.

WHAT'S  
WRONG?

...  
NOTHING, TO  
CONTINUE...








IN THE ABSENCE OF  
THE AVENGERS AND THE  
FANTASTIC FOUR, A NEW  
TEAM HAD EMERGED.

THE THUNDERBOLTS  
GAINED THE ADMIRATION  
OF A WORLD UNAWARE  
THAT THEY WERE, IN FACT,  
VILLAINS POSING  
AS HEROES.

LED BY BARON ZEMO POSING AS  
CITIZEN V, SEVERAL OF THEM  
ENDED UP REJECTING, OVER TIME,  
THEIR OPPORTUNISTIC WAYS IN  
ATTEMPTS TO REDEEM THEMSELVES.





EARTH'S MUTANT POPULATION HAD EXPLODED. TO THE NORTH OF MADAGASCAR, THE ISLAND OF GENOSHA BECAME HOME TO OVER SIXTEEN MILLION HOMO SUPERIOR. UNTIL CASSANDRA NOVA, CHARLES XAVIER'S TWIN SISTER, USED ROGUE SENTINELS TO ERADICATE THEM IN AN ACT OF UNREPENTANT GENOCIDE.

IN THE AFTERMATH, XAVIER REFUSED TO KEEP HIS STUDENTS IN HIDING ANY LONGER AND TOOK PROACTIVE PUBLIC STEPS TO IMPROVE HUMAN-MUTANT RELATIONS.

WHILE CYCLOPS AND ERMIA FROST BECAME CO-HEADMASTERS OF THE XAVIER INSTITUTE, XAVIER AND MAGNETO BEGAN REBUILDING GENOSHA TOGETHER.



IN AMERICA, TWO LONG-RETIRED HEROES FOUND NEW LIFE. ONE, **ROBERT REYNOLDS**--ACTIVE YEARS BEFORE THANKS TO AN ATTEMPT TO RECREATE THE SUPER-SOLDIER FORMULA--AWOKE FROM AN AMNESIAC STATE AND RECLAIMED HIS IDENTITY AS **THE SENTRY**.

HIS PHOTOSYNTHETIC POWERS WERE VIRTUALLY LIMITLESS, HELP IN CHECK ONLY BY THE MENTAL BLOCKS OF HIS VARIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL ILLNESSES.

THE OTHER, **JESSICA JONES**, HAD BEEN EXPOSED TO RADIOACTIVE CHEMICALS AS A TEENAGER, GAINING POWERS INCLUDING SUPER-HUMAN STRENGTH AND DURABILITY. FOR A SHORT TIME, SHE OPERATED UNDER THE CODENAME **JEWEL** UNTIL SHE WAS TRAUMATIZED BY AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE MIND-CONTROLLING **PURPLE MAN**, LEAVING JEWEL BEHIND. PRIVATE DETECTIVE JONES OPENED **ALIAS INVESTIGATIONS**.

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A WEALTHY ENTREPRENEUR, **X-FORCE** EVOLVED INTO THE **X-STATIX** AND QUICKLY BECAME MEDIA SUPERSTARS.



MEANWHILE, ANOTHER TEAM OF YOUNG HEROES WAS FORCED DOWN A FAR DIFFERENT PATH ONCE THEY DISCOVERED THEIR PARENTS WERE THE CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION **THE PRIDE**, FLEEING THEIR HERITAGE TO CHART THEIR OWN DESTINY, THEY BECAME **RUNAWAYS**.



BESIEGED BY DEADLY ATTACKS, THEIR HEADQUARTERS DEMOLISHED AND THEIR RANKS WINNOWN, THE AVENGERS WERE NEARLY DESTROYED BY A MYSTERY OPPONENT.


ULTIMATELY THEIR FOE STOOD REVEALED AS ONE OF THEIR OWN--WANDA MAXIMOFF, THE SCARLET WITCH, WHO HAD BEEN DRIVEN SLOWLY INSANE BY THE DISCOVERY THAT HER BELOVED TWIN INFANTS WERE NO MORE THAN EMPTY CONSTRUCTS HER OWN SUBCONSCIOUS HAD CREATED.

AS A RESULT OF THE SCARLET WITCH'S ATTACKS, THE AVENGERS DISBANDED FOR A TIME, REUNITING IN THE INTERIM AS A NEW, LOOSER-KNIT TEAM.

THEY WOULD EVENTUALLY REBUILD THEIR ORGANIZATION--BUT ONLY AFTER A CRISIS THAT WOULD FIT THEM AGAINST ONE ANOTHER WITH A FEROCITY THEY HAD NEVER BEFORE EXPERIENCED.







EVEN UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYES OF MAGNETO AND CHARLES XAVIER, WANDA'S POWERS CONTINUED TO BECOME MORE VOLATILE.

QUICKSILVER, FEARFUL THAT HIS SISTER MIGHT BE EXECUTED FOR HER CRIMES, MANIPULATED HER INTO TRANSFORMING GLOBAL REALITY INTO ONE IN WHICH HUMANS WERE RULED BY MUTANTS. IN TURN LED BY MAGNETO'S ROYAL HOUSE OF M.

FINDING THIS EXISTENCE NO SAFER THAN THE ONE SHE'D ABANDONED, THE SCARLET WITCH REVERTED REALITY WITH ONE ALTERATION: THE NEAR-ERADICATION OF MUTANT POWERS WORLDWIDE, REDUCING THE MUTANT POPULATION FROM MILLIONS TO mere HUNDREDS.

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THE ILLUMINATI, HAVING DECIDED THAT AN INCREASINGLY RAGEFUL HULK WAS TOO DANGEROUS TO REMAIN ON EARTH, EXILED THE BEAST INTO SPACE.

THOUGH THEY HAD INTENDED FOR HIM TO ARRIVE ON A PEACEFUL WORLD, A FREAK ACCIDENT CAUSED THE HULK TO INSTEAD CRASH ONTO THE GLADIATORIAL PLANET SAKAAR.

A CONFRONTATION WITH JAMES BARNES, THE WINTER SOLDIER, GAVE CAPTAIN AMERICA THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESTORE HIS FORMER PARTNER'S LOST MEMORIES AND TRUE PERSONALITY USING THE COSMIC CUBE.

OVERCOME WITH REMORSE, BARNES ATTEMPTED TO PAY FOR PAST SINS BY BECOMING A DEEP-COVER OPERATIVE FOR NICK FURY.



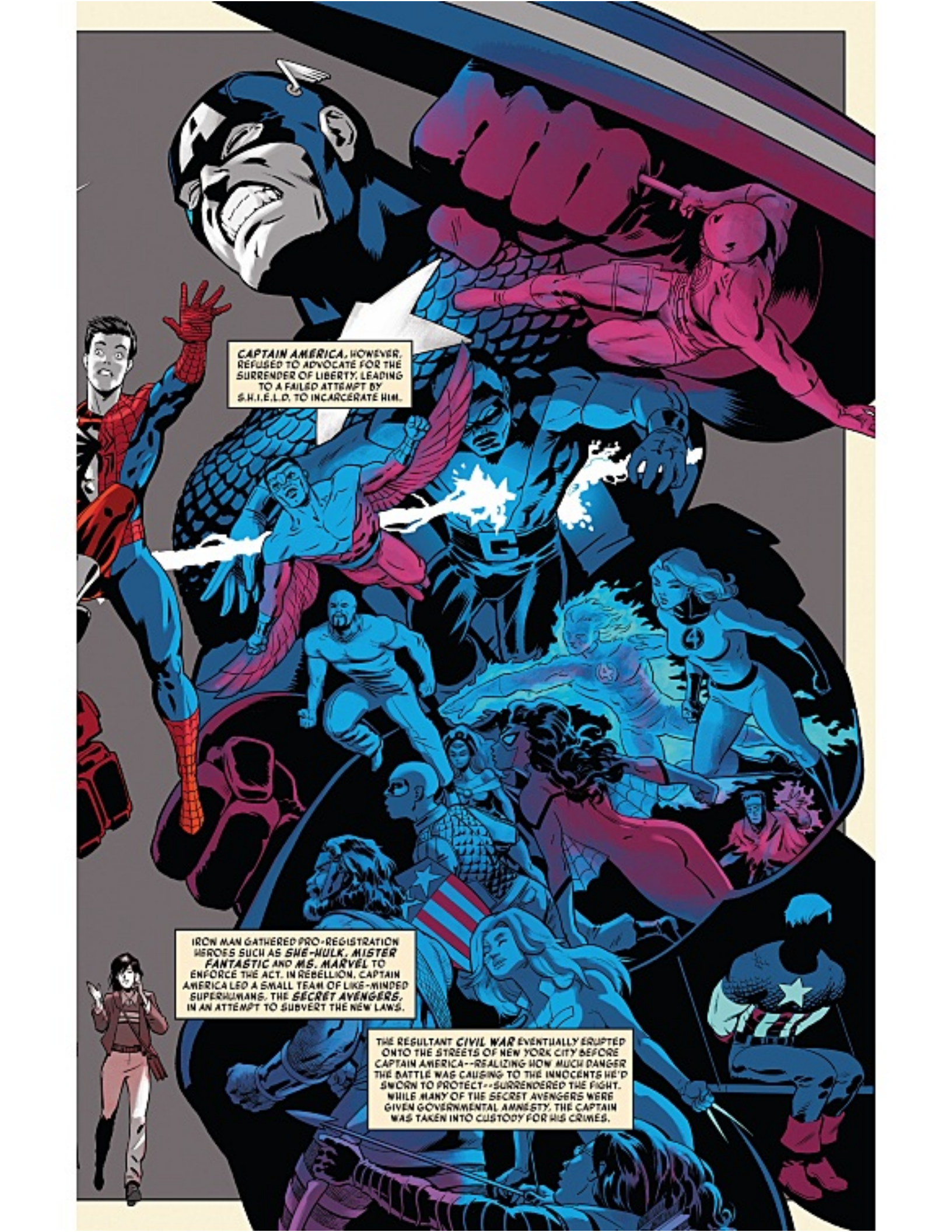


A BATTLE BETWEEN THE NEW WARRIORS AND NITRO ACCIDENTALLY RESULTED IN THE DEATHS OF HUNDREDS OF CIVILIAN BYSTANDERS, GIVING AMERICA'S POLITICIANS THE PUBLIC SUPPORT REQUIRED TO PASS THE SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION ACT.

EARTH'S HEROES WERE SHARPLY DIVIDED BY NEW LAWS REQUIRING THEM TO BE MONITORED AND TRAINED AND TO SURRENDER THEIR REAL NAMES TO THEIR GOVERNMENT. IRON MAN FELT THE ACT WAS REASONABLE AND INEVITABLE.








CAPTAIN AMERICA, HOWEVER, REFUSED TO ADVOCATE FOR THE SURRENDER OF LIBERTY, LEADING TO A FAILED ATTEMPT BY S.H.I.E.L.D. TO INCARCERATE HIM.

IRON MAN GATHERED PRO-REGISTRATION HEROES SUCH AS SHE-HULK, MISTER FANTASTIC AND MS. MARVEL TO ENFORCE THE ACT. IN REBELLION, CAPTAIN AMERICA LED A SMALL TEAM OF LIKE-MINDED SUPERHEROES, THE SECRET AVENGERS, IN AN ATTEMPT TO SUBVERT THE NEW LAWS.

THE RESULTANT CIVIL WAR EVENTUALLY ERUPTED ONTO THE STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY BEFORE CAPTAIN AMERICA--REALIZING HOW MUCH DANGER THE BATTLE WAS CAUSING TO THE INNOCENTS HE'D SWORN TO PROTECT--SURRENDERED THE FIGHT. WHILE MANY OF THE SECRET AVENGERS WERE GIVEN GOVERNMENTAL AMNESTY, THE CAPTAIN WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY FOR HIS CRIMES.





ALTHOUGH SOME HELD THE CAPTAIN IN DISGRACE, HIS NATION NEVERTHELESS FELL INTO MOURNING AFTER THE MACHINATIONS OF THE RED SKULL BROUGHT ABOUT HIS ASSASSINATION.


TWO MEN WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN BRINGING THE SKULL TO JUSTICE AND MAINTAINING ROGERS' DREAMS FOR AMERICA.

ONE, **SAM WILSON**, HAD PARTNERED WITH ROGERS DURING A PRIOR CONFLICT WITH THE SKULL, ASSUMING THE COSTUMED IDENTITY OF THE **FALCON**.


TELEPATHICALLY LINKED WITH HIS BIRD OF PREY, **REDWING**, WILSON DIVIDED HIS TIME BETWEEN DEFENDING THE EARTH AS AN AVENGER AND PROTECTING HIS NEIGHBORHOOD IN HARLEM, NEW YORK.

THE OTHER, THE **WINTER SOLDIER**, HONORED ROGERS' FINAL REQUEST BY ADOPTING THE ROLE OF **CAPTAIN AMERICA** AND CONTINUING HIS FRIEND'S LEGACY.







ON SAKAAR, THE HULK EVENTUALLY ASCENDED TO THE PLANETARY THRONE AND TOOK A WIFE, ONLY TO WATCH HIS NEW WORLD DIE WHEN THE SPACESHIP IN WHICH HE HAD ARRIVED EXPLODED IN A FREAK ACCIDENT.




HULK MISTAKENLY BLAMED THE ILLUMINATI FOR THE EXPLOSION AND ITS AFTERMATH AND SWORE REVENGE.



ALONGSIDE HIS TEAM OF SUPER-POWERED GLADIATORS, THE WARBOUND, HE RETURNED TO EARTH.




THERE, HE DESTROYED AVENGERS TOWER, DEFEATED AND SUBJUGATED IRON MAN, DOCTOR STRANGE, THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND OTHERS AND CLAIMED RULE OVER NEW YORK CITY.



ONLY AFTER THE HULK TURNED HIS WRATH TOWARD MIK--THE WARBOUND ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SAKAAR'S DESTRUCTION-- WAS IRON MAN ABLE TO NULLIFY ENOUGH OF THE BEAST'S GAMMA RADIATION TO DEFEAT HIM, RENDERING HIM COMATOSE.





TRILLIONS OF MILES  
AWAY, ANNIHILUS'  
ANNIHILATION WAVE  
OBLITERATED THE  
SKRULL HOMELAND.

SUBSEQUENTLY, THE  
TECHNO-ORGANIC  
PHALANX RACE  
SIMILARLY RAVAGED  
THE KREE EMPIRE.

AMONG THE NOTEWORTHY  
HEROES WHO HELPED REPEL  
THE PHALANX WAS **PETER QUILL**,  
ALIAS **STAR-LORD**, A YOUNG  
HALF EARTHLING, HALF SPARTOI  
WHO HAD TRAVELED INTO SPACE  
TO SEEK HIS BIRTHRIGHT.

FOLLOWING THE ROUT OF THE  
PHALANX, QUILL ASSEMBLED  
AN INTERPLANETARY CREW TO  
SERVE AS THE **GUARDIANS  
OF THE GALAXY**.

ITS MEMBERS INCLUDED  
A GIFTED MECHANIC  
NAMED **ROCKET  
RACCOON**--

--**GROOT**, A FLORA  
COLOSSUS FROM PLANET X  
WHOSE LANGUAGE WAS  
UNDERSTOOD ONLY  
BY ROCKET--

--**DRAX THE  
DESTROYER**, A  
FIGHTER WITH SUPER-  
HUMAN STRENGTH--

--**GAMORA**, THE  
ADOPTED DAUGHTER  
OF THANOS--

--AND, FOR A BRIEF  
TIME, **PHYLX-VELL**,  
THEN THE MOST RECENT  
WARRIOR TO HOLD THE  
TITLE OF **QUASAR**.



THE **SKRULLS**, THEIR CIVILIZATION SHATTERED AND IN NEED OF A NEW HOMEWORLD, SET THEIR SIGHTS ON EARTH.

THEIR INVASION BEGAN WITH THE ACTIVATION OF NUMEROUS "SLEEPER AGENTS," SKRULLS WHO LONG AGO HAD SECRETLY REPLACED EARTHLINGS SUCH AS HANK PYM AND ELEKTRA.

PARANCIA REIGNED AS THE INVASION CONTINUED, WITH NO ONE CERTAIN WHO AMONG THEM WAS AN ALLY AND WHO WAS A SHAPE-SHIFTER UNTIL REED RICHARDS MANAGED TO CREATE A SKRULL DETECTOR.


THE SKRULLS WERE FORCED TO RETREAT--

# BLAME!

--BUT NOT BEFORE NORMAN OSBORN BECAME AN INTERNATIONAL HERO BY MURDERING THE SKRULL QUEEN.







OSBORN, EVER  
SCHEMING, QUICKLY  
TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE  
OF HIS NEW PRESTIGE.

HE ACCEPTED THE LEADERSHIP OF  
H.A.M.M.E.R., AN INTERNATIONAL  
ESPIONAGE AGENCY THAT BRIEFLY  
REPLACED S.H.I.E.L.D., AND SURROUNDED  
HIMSELF WITH SIMILARLY CORRUPT  
ASSOCIATES IN ORDER TO BEND  
GOVERNMENTS TO HIS WILL.

AS THE IRON PATRIOT, HE  
FOUNDED HIS OWN AVENGERS  
AND X-MEN TEAMS COMPRISING  
DISGUISED VILLAINS, WHILE  
THOSE HEROES OPPOSED TO  
HIS ACTIVITIES WERE BRANDED  
AS FUGITIVES FROM THE LAW.



IN THE INTERIM, THE ACTUAL X-MEN EMBARKED ON A QUEST TO SAVE THE FIRST MUTANT CHILD BORN FOLLOWING THE NEAR-EXTINCTION OF THEIR RACE, A "MUTANT MESSIAH" WHO WOULD BE NAMED HOPE SUMMERS.

THEIR RESCUE EFFORT PITTED THEM AGAINST THE PURIFIERS, RELIGIOUS ZEALOTS DEDICATED TO THE ANNIHILATION OF MUTANTS. A SERIES OF BEASTS DESIGNATED PREDATOR X--

--AND LONGTIME ALLY BISHOP, A REFUGEE FROM AN ALTERNATE FUTURE IN WHICH MUTANTS WERE BRANDED AND INCARCERATED.

IN DESPERATION, TARGETED BY OSSBORN'S MACHINATIONS, THE X-MEN RELOCATED TO THEIR OWN AUTOCRATIC ISLAND-NATION OF UTOPIA OFF THE COAST OF CALIFORNIA, WHERE THEY WOULD BE TEMPORARILY SAFE FROM PERSECUTION.

TWO KEY TEAMMATES OF THE X-MEN DURING THIS PERIOD WERE GAMBIT, MANIPULATOR OF KINETIC ENERGY, AND ROGUE, WHOSE TOUCH ABSORBED OTHERS' ABILITIES AND MEMORIES.

BISHOP WRONGLY BELIEVED HOPE'S EXISTENCE WOULD LEAD TO HIS OWN DYSTOPIAN TIMELINE AND ACCIDENTALLY SHOT PROFESSOR XAVIER IN AN ATTEMPT TO END HOPE'S LIFE.







WITH OSBORN GONE, COMMANDER ROGERS  
USHERED IN A POST-REGISTRATION **HEROIC  
AGE**, ASSEMBLING A NEW TEAM OF AVENGERS  
AND SERVING AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF A  
REBUILT S.H.I.E.L.D. FOR A SHORT TIME BEFORE  
RECLAIMING HIS CAPTAIN AMERICA IDENTITY.

MS. MARVEL SHED HER  
PREVIOUS COSTUMED  
IDENTITY TO BECOME THE  
NEW **CAPTAIN MARVEL**.

UNDER S.H.I.E.L.D.'S AEGIS,  
SEVERAL OF ITS AGENTS  
FORMED A BLACK-OPS SECRET  
AVENGERS UNIT, AMONG THEM  
**MARCUS JOHNSON**, WHO  
TOOK HIS FATHER'S  
NAME--**NICK FURY**--


--FORMER  
DIRECTOR  
**MARIA  
HILL**--

--STRATEGIST  
**PHIL  
COULSON**--

--AND  
SUPERSPY  
**SHARON  
CARTER**.





Spider-Man is shown in mid-air, leaping through a window of a brick building. He is in his classic red and blue suit. The window frame is visible, and a man in a red suit is looking out from inside. The background shows a cityscape with other buildings and a clear blue sky.


A LOCALIZED PHENOMENON OF INVOLUNTARY POWER TRANSFORMED MANHATTAN INTO "SPIDER-ISLAND" WHEN THE JACKAL AND HIS BENEFACTOR, THE SPIDER QUEEN, UNLEASHED A VIRUS THAT DUPLICATED SPIDER-MAN'S POWERS IN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ORDINARY CITIZENS, CREATING CHAOS.

Spider-Man is shown in mid-air, leaping through a window of a brick building. He is in his classic red and blue suit. The window frame is visible, and a man in a red suit is looking out from inside. The background shows a cityscape with other buildings and a clear blue sky.

THE QUEEN'S AMBITION TO CREATE A NEW ARACHNID-BASED SPLINTER OF HUMANITY WAS QUELLED BY SPIDER-MAN WITH THE AID OF REED RICHARDS, HORIZON LABS AND Kaine, A PETER PARKER CLONE WHO CALLED HIMSELF THE SCARLET SPIDER.







THE MUTANTS' "UTOPIA" PROVED ANYTHING BUT. ESCALATING DISAGREEMENTS LED TO A SCHISM IN THE X-MEN'S RANKS, WITH HALF THE TEAM RETURNING TO AMERICA. THE MUTANT DIVIDE, HOWEVER, WAS RELATIVELY SHORT-LIVED AS THE X-MEN WERE FORCED TO PIT THEMSELVES AGAINST EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES.

WHEN THE AVENGERS LEARNED THAT THE PHOENIX FORCE WAS RETURNING TO EARTH, THEY INTENDED TO REPEL IT. THIS CAUSED THEM TO COME TO BLOWS WITH THE X-MEN, WHO BELIEVED THE FORCE COULD BE USED TO REJUVENATE THE MUTANT RACE.

DURING THE SUBSEQUENT BATTLES, HOPE SUMMERS SOUGHT TO BECOME THE PHOENIX FORCE'S HOST, BUT THE AVENGERS ACCIDENTALLY SPLINTERED THE FORCE INTO FIVE PARTS THAT INHABITED CYCLOPS, EMMA FROST, NAMOR, COLOSSUS AND MAGIK.

ULTIMATELY, CYCLOPS DRAINED THE OTHERS' FORCE POWERS TO BECOME A TYRANNICAL DARK PHOENIX. THIS ALLOWED THE SCARLET WITCH AND HOPE TO PURGE THE PHOENIX FORCE FROM HIS BODY AND USE IT TO RESTORE THE MUTANT POPULATION.



# CHIAVELLIAN MEMORABLES

## STAN'S SOAPBOX

For months I've been wanting to yak with you about this subject, but it always gets shoved aside by something more urgent. Well, this time I'm gonna say it, no matter what! This time I'm out to give the great guys and gals who produce these mags a small portion of the glowing tribute they so richly deserve. Having spent almost all my life in comics, I can testify to never having known a more ethical or honorable creative group. I've seen artists sacrifice long hours to help other artists perfect their work—writers giving their time unstintingly to polish another author's script. In this, a most highly competitive field, you'll rarely hear one artist deride another's work, but instead, the more talented the man, the more likely he is to provide advice, support, and encouragement to those who need it most. So here's to the titanicly talented crew I work with; and to the equally gifted gang who toil for our competitors. Your work is demanding, your hours are long, your profession a lonely one. But you provide pleasure and enchantment to untold millions—and, though you may never meet them personally, they know you—respect you—they've taken you into their lives—and into their hearts. For you, and I, and all of us help them weave their most wondrous dreams.

Excelsior!

S. L.



STAN LEE  
FOREVER

draw ol' Greenskin—claiming that even Irving Forbush could do a better job. If they were writing to the FANTASTIC FOUR, we'd swear they're Yancy Streeters. But the odd thing is this—WE think Herb's one of the greatest additions to our stupefyin' staff since Raquel Welch (No, Norman—don't work here. Calm down!)—and have been climbing ever

DAREDEVIL #60  
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It's DD at his gre

HULK #124: Br  
married? The R  
the revenge-cr

IRON MAN #  
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SUB-MARINER  
and only Dr.  
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CYCLOPS, A CHANGED AND BITTER MAN FOLLOWING HIS BRUSH WITH THE PHOENIX FORCE, BEGAN A SAVAGE CRUSADE AGAINST MUTANT PERSECUTION THAT NEARLY ESCALATED INTO A MUTANT CIVIL WAR.

DESPERATE TO REMIND CYCLOPS OF THE RATIONAL SOUL HE'D ONCE BEEN, **THE BEAST** REACHED INTO THE TIMESTREAM AND BROUGHT FORTH FAR YOUNGER, MORE HOPEFUL AND IDEALISTIC VERSIONS OF THE ORIGINAL FIVE X-MEN TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR CYCLOPS.

DESPITE THEIR UNFAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS, THEY UNDERTOOK SEVERAL SUCCESSFUL MISSIONS BEFORE RETURNING TO THEIR OWN ERA. THEIR MEMORIES OF THEIR FUTURE WIPED.

AROUND THAT TIME, THE AVENGERS EMBARKED ON A TIME-TRAVEL MISSION OF THEIR OWN TO SAVE EARTH FROM DOMINATION BY THE EVER-EVOLVING **ULTRON**, A CYBERNETIC BEING OF PURE MALEVOLENCE CREATED BY HANK PYM.



To Be  
Continued!



# NEXT





# HISTORY OF THE MARVEL #5 ANNOTATIONS

Design: Stacie Zucker



While the people of Earth believed their prominent heroes to be dead, criminal mastermind Baron Zemo hatched a plan to disguise a number of former Masters of Evil as heroes, intending to earn the world's trust while secretly conquering Earth. As Citizen V, Zemo led MACH-1 (the Beetle/Abe Jenkins), Techno (the Fixer/Norbert Ebersol), Atlas (Goliath/Erik Josten), Meteorite (Moonstone/Karla Sofen) and Songbird (Screaming Mimi/Melissa Gold) as the Thunderbolts, a team that quickly found public favor and popularity. Despite their villainous secret, the team welcomed Jolt (Hallie Takahama), an orphan who gained bioelectric energy powers after insane geneticist Arnim Zola experimented on her. Zemo believed her enthusiastic presence could help solidify their positive public image. However, once his partners began embracing the heroic lifestyle for real, Zemo leaked their identities to authorities to force them to remain by his side. On the run from heroes and their former peers alike, the ex-villains rejected Zemo and began a quest to truly redeem themselves by trying to serve the greater good rather than villainy. The Thunderbolts first appeared in *Incredible Hulk* #449 (1997); the team's origin was told in *Thunderbolts Annual* 1997. Their true identities were revealed to readers in *Thunderbolts* #1 (1997) and to the denizens of the Marvel Universe in *Thunderbolts* #10 (1998). Simultaneously, the Avengers and Fantastic Four lived out their lives in a pocket dimension created by Franklin Richards and remained unaware of their previous lives in their native reality, Earth-616. When the enigmatic Celestials became aware of the two Earths, they demanded Franklin destroy one. With the help of Franklin, Spider-Man (Peter Parker), Doctor Stephen Strange and a portion of the Hulk left behind in Earth-616, the stranded heroes reclaimed their memories and returned to their home reality in time to confront the Thunderbolts. The return of Earth's heroes was met with great relief and rejoicing. The heroes lived alternate lives in *Avengers* #1-13, *Captain America* #1-13, *Fantastic Four* #1-13 and *Iron Man* #1-13 (all 1996-1997). Their return was chronicled in *Heroes Reborn: The Return* #1-4 (1997) and continued to unfold in *Avengers* #1, *Captain America* #1, *Fantastic Four* #1 and *Iron Man* #1 (all 1998). The confrontation with the Thunderbolts took place in *Thunderbolts* #11-12 (1998).





A period of extraordinary tumult and expansion for the X-Men began when the mutant population of Earth experienced a dramatic increase and many started undergoing secondary mutations, which granted mutants additional abilities and complications. During this time, Charles Xavier's malevolent genetic twin sister, Cassandra Nova, who believed killing Xavier would allow her to master the universe, slaughtered the population of the island nation of Genosha—sixteen million mutants—to weaken Xavier's spirit. Nova then secretly switched minds with Xavier and publicly outed him as a mutant, revealed the true purpose of his school and opened the school to hundreds of young mutants from around the world. Following the discovery of Nova's duplicity and her defeat by the X-Men, a new recruit to the school's teaching staff, Kuan-Yin Xorn, came to believe he was the X-Men's foe Magneto and began recruiting vulnerable students to his cause of mutant supremacy. After killing more than 5,000 people in New York City, "Magneto" was opposed by the X-Men. During the battle, he killed X-Man Jean Grey and was subsequently decapitated by Wolverine (Logan/James Howlett). A disillusioned Charles Xavier soon left the X-Men to begin rebuilding Genosha alongside the true Magneto (Max Eisenhardt). *New X-Men #114-154* (2001-2004) and *New X-Men Annual 2001* contained the main storyline of the X-Men through this era. Xavier's efforts to rebuild Genosha began in *Uncanny X-Men #442-443* (2004) and *Excalibur #1* (2004).



JEAN GREY'S DEATH

Bob Reynolds, a teenager suffering from schizophrenia and anxiety, stole an experimental serum from one of his teachers who was secretly working for the government. The serum was an attempt to re-create the formula that transformed Steve Rogers into Captain America. Hoping to get high, Reynolds drank the serum and instead gained immense solar-powered abilities as the Sentry, but he also manifested the malevolent Void personality. The two separated into individual entities, both unaware they were personalities of the same being. Not long after the debuts of the Fantastic Four, Spider-Man and the Hulk, the Sentry became a public hero.



After repeated battles, the Sentry recognized the Void as an aspect of himself. The criminal Mastermind (Jason Wyngarde) forced the Sentry to telepathically erase knowledge of himself and the Void from humanity as well as himself. Merged with the Void once more, Reynolds lived a quiet, unassuming life for years, the only public knowledge of the Sentry being comic books created by artists who had vague impressions placed in their minds by Reynolds' subconscious. Sometime after Earth's heroes returned from Franklin Richards' pocket dimension, the Void broke free again, renewing his constant struggle with the Sentry for ascendancy. The Sentry's tale was told in *Sentry #1-5* (2000-2001) and *Sentry vs. the Void #1* (2001). Mastermind's manipulation of the Sentry was revealed in *New Avengers #9-10* (2005).



THE VOID





Teenaged Jessica Campbell was in a car when it collided with a U.S. Army truck, killing her family. A canister of unidentified material fell from the truck, and exposure to it saved Campbell's life. After months in a coma, Campbell was adopted by the Jones family. She later discovered the material granted her flight and superhuman strength, which she used as the super hero Jewel. During a confrontation with the Purple Man, Jewel became mentally enthralled by his pheromone powers and was his personal plaything for months. When the Purple Man sent Jewel to attack the Avengers, the shock of attacking her idol the Scarlet Witch (Wanda Maximoff) broke his control over her; mental assistance from telepathic X-Men helped her eventually recover. Traumatized by the abuse she suffered, Jones became cynical and brusque, quit being Jewel and opened a private investigation firm called Alias Investigations. A later confrontation with the Purple Man activated psychic blocks established by the X-Men, enabling Jones to defeat her tormentor. Jessica Jones first appeared in *Alias #1* (2001), and her origin was gradually told through *Alias #28* (2004).



AS JEWEL

Capitalizing on the public's fascination with celebrities, a group of mutants gathered as **X-Force** and used their powers to gain popularity and riches as super heroes. Eventually obtaining their own reality show, which was filmed by Cold War experiment Doop, X-Force televised their missions and became worldwide celebrities complete with countless licensed materials. However, when the majority of the team was killed on live television, new members were chosen and also became stars. Eventually, the team changed its name to **X-Statix**. Following a number of dangerous exploits and teammate deaths, the members decided to retire following one last mission. However, that mission resulted in the slaughter of the team. Among the most famous of the team's members were the mass-manipulating Phat, hyperesthetic Mister Sensitive, the zombie Dead Girl, teleporting U-Go Girl, the lycanthropic Vivisector and acid-sweating Anarchist. X-Force first appeared in *X-Force #116* (2001) and changed their name to X-Statix in *X-Force #129* and *X-Statix #1* (both 2002). The team's death was recorded in *X-Statix #26* (2004).



X-STATIX



X-FORCE (EARLY ROSTER)

Unaware that all their parents were secretly criminals of the highest order, six teens suffered through annual gatherings of their families, oblivious to what their parents did during these visits. During one such gathering, the teens' curiosity got the best of them and, led by Alex Wilder, they secretly observed their parents sacrifice a young woman to the Gibborim, a trio of powerful beings they served who intended to conquer Earth. Horrified by the truth, the teens ran away from home and vowed to stop their parents. Over time, the teens discovered various abilities; Nico Minoru learned she was a sorcerer, Molly Hayes' mutant strength manifested, Karolina Dean discovered she was a super-powered extraterrestrial and Gertrude Yorkes found she had a bond with a genetically engineered dinosaur. Chase Stein pilfered advanced technology from his parents, rounding out the group's power base. Calling themselves the **Runaways**, the teens' quest to confront their parents often brought them into contact with various superhumans. The Runaways' journey began in *Runaways #1* (2003).



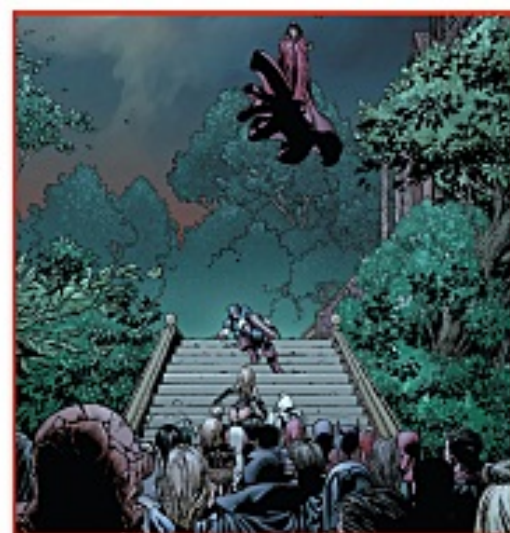
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Sometime after her marriage to the Vision, the Scarlet Witch (Wanda Maximoff) harnessed vast magical power into a spell that enabled her to become pregnant. Unaware she had in actuality converted shards of the demon Mephisto's then-fragmented spirit into embryos, the Scarlet Witch gave birth to twins, Thomas and William. Time-traveling Immortus believed her children would threaten reality itself and plotted to destroy them. He began by manipulating the governments of Earth into kidnapping and dismantling the Vision out of the fear he would attempt a global computer takeover as he had done once before. The dismantling essentially killed Vision by destroying his consciousness. Though rebuilt, the Vision was now an emotionless robot, traumatizing the Scarlet Witch. Not long after, the Scarlet Witch learned the true origin of her children and was unable to prevent Mephisto from absorbing them to reconstitute his soul. Her mentor Agatha Harkness tried to prevent the Scarlet Witch from going insane by erasing her memories of her now-nonexistent children. However, when the Witch remembered her children much later, she sought out mystical assistance from the more powerful and less scrupulous Doctor Doom (Victor von Doom) who helped her tap into the universal "Life Force." Using the force, the Witch resurrected her sons in the past as Billy Kaplan and Tommy Shepard; the Life Force subsequently possessed the Witch and drove her insane. She subsequently began warping reality and ultimately attacked the Avengers, destroying their mansion and causing the deaths of teammates Jack of Hearts, Ant-Man (Scott Lang), Hawkeye (Clint Barton) and the Vision. The Avengers only survived her attack with the help of Doctor Strange, who shut down the Scarlet Witch's mind. Unsure what to do with their insane, now-mindless loved one, the demoralized Avengers allowed mutant supremacist Magneto—whom all believed was her father—to take the Scarlet Witch into his custody. Magneto took her to Charles Xavier in the hope that his telepathy could help repair her mind. The Avengers disbanded following these events. The Scarlet Witch cast the spell to conceive her children in *Vision and the Scarlet Witch #4* (1985) and gave birth in *Vision and the Scarlet Witch #12* (1986). The Vision was disassembled and rebuilt in *West Coast Avengers #42-45* (1989). The Scarlet Witch's twins were revealed to be shards of Mephisto's soul in *Avengers West Coast #51-52* (1989). Immortus' manipulations were summarized in *Avengers Forever #8* (1999). The Scarlet Witch's encounter with the Life Force and confirmation that Billy Kaplan and Tommy Shepherd were her resurrected children were revealed in *Avengers: The Children's Crusade #1-9* (2010-2012), and the Witch's full descent into madness came to a head in *Avengers #500-503* (2004). Magneto taking the Scarlet Witch to Charles Xavier was revealed in *Avengers Finale #1* (2005), the same issue the Avengers disbanded.



Not long after this, a prison break occurred on the Raft, a superhuman penitentiary. When a number of heroes, including Luke Cage, Spider-Man (Peter Parker), Captain America (Steve Rogers), Iron Man (Tony Stark) and Spider-Woman (actually an alien Skrull impersonating Jessica Drew), gathered to oppose a prison-wide escape, Captain America saw it as a sign the Avengers should reform and invited this group to stay together. The group was soon joined by Wolverine (Logan/James Howlett) and later by the Sentry. The formation of this new iteration of the Avengers unfolded in *New Avengers #1-6* (2005).







Despite his best efforts, telepath Charles Xavier was unable to cure the the insanity of the Scarlet Witch (Wanda Maximoff). To protect her and others, Xavier often psychically forced her to sleep. When Xavier approached the Avengers and X-Men to discuss the problem, the teams decided they needed to speak with the Scarlet Witch directly. When they approached her, she used her powers to re-create reality to be one where mutantkind was the ruling class of Earth, led by Magneto (Max Eisenhardt) and his family, including the Scarlet Witch. In her new reality, the Scarlet Witch also resurrected Hawkeye (Clint Barton), who had been killed during her breakdown. However, various heroes began remembering reality as it was and eventually set out collectively to confront the Scarlet Witch. During the climactic battle, the heroes learned that the Scarlet Witch's brother, Quicksilver (Pietro Maximoff), convinced her to alter reality in an effort to save her life, believing the Avengers and X-Men intended to execute her. The confused and deluded Witch ended the battle when, out of sheer frustration at mutant/human tension, she uttered the words "no more mutants" and restored reality to what it had been but with a few significant differences. *House of M #1-8 (2005)*.

Awaking in a restored reality, the populace of Earth was shocked to learn the mutant race had decreased from over a million beings to around two hundred, their mutant gifts simply erased. Only a handful of the Avengers and X-Men were aware of the reason because Doctor Stephen Strange had protected them when the Scarlet Witch cast her spell. Overnight, the remaining X-Men became the guardians of a race that had suddenly become an endangered species. Also in this restored reality, Hawkeye was returned to life. The decimation of the mutant race began in *House of M #7-8 (2005)* and *Decimation: House of M—The Day After #1 (2006)*.



Still in Soviet possession following his "death," James "Bucky" Barnes was revived and given a cybernetic arm to replace the one he lost. Taking advantage of the amnesiac state Barnes was now in, the Soviets brainwashed him into being their assassin, the **Winter Soldier**, who conducted strategic killings across the globe at his masters' behest. While training Natasha Romanoff in the Black Widow program, Barnes began a romantic relationship with her. When his original personality began to resurface, he was placed in suspended animation between missions to avoid him discovering his true self. He was eventually put into storage when the U.S.S.R. collapsed. In modern times, former Soviet general and now head of the Kronas Corporation Aleksander Lukin reactivated the Winter Soldier in a plot to obtain the reality-bending Cosmic Cube. Captain America (Steve Rogers), while working with Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D., discovered the Winter Soldier's true identity and used the Cosmic Cube to restore his friend's memory. Overcome with remorse over his time as a brainwashed assassin, Barnes used the Cosmic Cube to teleport away. *Captain America #1-14 (2004-2005)* showed Barnes' time as the Winter Soldier and his eventual restoration.







After the Hulk (Bruce Banner) inadvertently killed twenty-six people during a brawl, the so-called "Illuminati" of Mister Fantastic, Iron Man (Tony Stark), Doctor Stephen Strange and the Inhuman King Black Bolt devised a plan to exile him into space. After assisting S.H.I.E.L.D. in destroying a rogue satellite called Godseye, Hulk's ship was seized by the Illuminati, who told the Hulk they were sending him to a planet devoid of intelligent life where he would no longer pose a threat to Earth. Unexpectedly, the ship was pulled into a wormhole, ultimately crashing on the violent world of Sakaar. There, Hulk was enslaved and forced to fight as a gladiator in the Great Arena by the planet's tyrannical ruler, the Red King (Angmo-Asan). Earning the name the Green Scar, the Hulk bonded with several other combatants—becoming the Warbound—and eventually freed the Red King's slaves. Obsessed with killing the Hulk, the Red King unleashed deadly forces upon Sakaar, murdering innocents, which convinced his personal bodyguard, Calera, to rebel against him. Hulk united Sakaar's warring tribes, defeated the Red King and destroyed his doomsday weapon; the Hulk was made emperor, and in turn he took Calera as his queen. However, after Calera told Hulk she was pregnant, the warp core of the ship that exiled the Hulk to Sakaar exploded, killing millions, including Calera. Unaware his Warbound ally Miek orchestrated the explosion because he was dissatisfied with Hulk's intent to create a peaceful Sakaar, an enraged Hulk blamed the Illuminati and departed Sakaar with his Warbound for Earth. The death of the twenty-six people and the Illuminati's decision to send the Hulk to space was recounted in *New Avengers: Illuminati #1* (2006); the Hulk battled Godseye in *Incredible Hulk #89-91* (2006); the events of Planet Hulk took place in the *Incredible Hulk #92-105* (2006-2007).



When the youthful New Warriors staged a poorly planned televised attempt to capture escaped super-powered criminals in Stamford, Connecticut, over 600 civilians were killed when one of the criminals—the explosive Nitro—detonated. Angered by this and the sheer amount of collateral damage caused by superhuman battles, the U.S. Senate passed the Superhuman Registration Act (SHRA), requiring superhumans to register and reveal their identities to the government and then undergo training. A rift quickly formed in the super hero community between those who supported and those who were against the SHRA. Led by Iron Man (Tony Stark), the pro-SHRA forces worked with S.H.I.E.L.D. to apprehend those who refused to register, while anti-SHRA forces led by Captain America (Steve Rogers) continued their heroic activities in secret. After anti-SHRA Goliath (Bill Foster) was killed during a skirmish between the two sides, anti-SHRA forces freed numerous unregistered superhumans from incarceration in the Negative Zone, which ultimately resulted in a massive confrontation in New York City. While personally battling Iron Man, Captain America realized the public supported the SHRA and surrendered, ending hostilities. The superhuman civil war was recorded in *Civil War #1-7* (2006-2007).



After refusing to comply with the Superhuman Registration Act, Captain America (Steve Rogers) was shot by a sniper as he was led into court to stand trial for his crimes. Additionally, while unknowingly under the brainwashing of Doctor Faustus, Rogers' love Sharon Carter carried out a plan created by Cap's archenemy, the Red Skull (Johann Schmidt), by shooting Rogers in the stomach twice during the chaos created by the sniper's shot. Not realizing what she had done, Carter held Rogers' hand as he died. *Captain America #25* (2007).





WINTER SOLDIER, BLACK WIDOW, FALCON, SHARON CARTER

Devastated by the loss of Captain America (Steve Rogers), James "Bucky" Barnes began hunting the Red Skull (Johann Schmidt), whom he believed was behind Rogers' death. Eventually Barnes allied with his ex-lover the Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff) and also with Rogers' other close allies the Falcon (Sam Wilson) and Sharon Carter in searching for the Skull; in the process of their search, they all learned of Carter's brainwashing and unwitting culpability in Rogers' death. The quest to locate the Red Skull and discover the truth behind Captain America's death began in earnest in *Captain America #26* (2007).

Furious over being exiled to outer space by the so-called "Illuminati," the Hulk (Bruce Banner) returned to Earth with his Warbound allies, intending to exact vengeance on his former friends for sending him there and for the death of his wife, Caiera, who was killed when the ship the Illuminati used to exile the Hulk exploded. The Hulk remained unaware the detonation was orchestrated by one of his Warbound, Miek, who was not happy with the Hulk's plans to bring peace to the planet Sakaar. Upon arriving on Earth, the Hulk ordered the evacuation of Manhattan and gave a twenty-four-hour deadline for the Illuminati to come to him there. After brutally defeating the Illuminati members who banished him—Black Bolt (actually an alien Skrull disguised as him), Mister Fantastic, Iron Man (Tony Stark) and Doctor Stephen Strange—the Hulk forced them to fight each other. When Hulk's former friend the Sentry (Bob Reynolds) attacked him, much of Manhattan was destroyed, but when both reverted to their weaker human forms, Banner defeated Reynolds. After this, the Hulk learned of Miek's betrayal and in his rage threatened to shatter Earth. However, Tony Stark drained the Hulk's energy using advanced technology, leaving him in human form. Banner was subsequently imprisoned miles beneath the Mojave Desert. The Hulk's quest for vengeance took place in *World War Hulk #1-5* (2007).



Although he initially felt that his past as the brainwashed Winter Soldier assassin ruled him out, James "Bucky" Barnes decided to claim the shield and role of his best friend and mentor Captain America after reading a letter Steve Rogers left in the case of his death, one that asked for his trusted friends and allies to make sure that Captain America did not also die. At first uncomfortable, Bucky quickly adapted to the use of the shield and took up Cap's task of protecting America and the world both with the Avengers and on his own. Bucky's tenure as Captain America began in *Captain America #33-34* (2008).



HULK'S DEFEAT



Two consecutive crises devastated the universe: First, seeing all life as a threat to his existence, Annihilus of the Negative Zone launched an ambitious plan to invade the positive universe with his massive insectoid army called the **Annihilation Wave**. For months, the Wave ravaged countless planets and claimed countless lives but was opposed by the United Front army led by Earth's Nova (Richard Rider), the sole remaining member of the Nova Corps, which had been slaughtered by the Wave. The war waged until the united heroes freed Annihilus' captive, the world-devouring Galactus, who destroyed the Wave, and Nova killed Annihilus by gutting him. The second crisis unfolded when the malevolent Earthborn robot **Ultron's** consciousness became the guiding force behind the **Phalanx**, a hostile extraterrestrial race that assimilated living beings into their hive mind with a Techno-Organic virus. They



ANNIHILATION WAVE



ANNIHILUS' ARMY

conquered much of the Kree Empire. Ultron's plans for universal domination accelerated with the possession of the powerful, genetically engineered super-being Adam Warlock, whom Ultron considered a perfect combination of artificial and organic life. Ultron's Phalanx were opposed on numerous fronts by heroes from across the universe, who ultimately destroyed Ultron and rendered the Phalanx inert without his consciousness. Those infected by the Techno-Organic virus were purged of their infection. From the ranks of the heroes who opposed Ultron arose the **Guardians of the Galaxy**, a peacekeeping force of various heroes under the leadership of Star-Lord (Peter Quill). Over time, the Guardians roster included the assassin Gamora, furry tactical genius Rocket Raccoon, the violent Drax the Destroyer, the giant treelike Groot and half-Kree Phyla-Vell, daughter of the deceased Captain Marvel (Mar-Vell).



ANNIHILUS

The Annihilation Wave was recorded in *Annihilation: Prologue #1* (2006) and *Annihilation #1-6* (2006-2007). The Kree Empire was devastated by Ultron and the Phalanx in *Annihilation: Conquest Prologue #1* (2007) and *Annihilation: Conquest #1-6* (2007). The Guardians of the Galaxy's formation began in *Annihilation: Conquest—Starlord #1* (2007) and *Guardians of the Galaxy #1* (2008).



PHALANX



ADAM WARLOCK



ULTRON



EARLY GUARDIANS ROSTER



LATER GUARDIANS ROSTER



After the planet-devouring Galactus destroyed their homeworld, a fanatically religious faction of the shape-shifting Skrull aliens led by Queen Veranke began a long-term secret invasion of Earth. After abducting and replacing various key humans with undetectable Skrull impostors—including Henry Pym, Hand leader Elektra Natchios, agents "Dum Dum" Dugan and Valentina de Fontaine of the peacekeeping S.H.I.E.L.D. organization and Avengers butler Edwin Jarvis—Queen Veranke herself joined the Avengers disguised as Spider-Woman (Jessica Drew). After some time spent manipulating events to weaken Earth's defenses, the Skrulls disabled every piece of technology created by Tony Stark (Iron Man), including that used by S.H.I.E.L.D. and



Earth's extraterrestrial espionage agency S.W.O.R.D., trapped the Avengers in the Savage Land and unleashed a horde of super-powered Super-Skrull warriors. Eventually, Mister Fantastic invented a device to detect the hidden Skrulls, allowing Earth's superhumans to marshal their forces and confront Veranke's army in Central Park; following a massive battle, the Skrulls were defeated, and Thunderbolts leader, the secretly criminally insane Norman Osborn, publicly executed Veranke. The humans replaced by Skrull impostors were located, Tony Stark was blamed for Earth's vulnerability and Norman Osborn became a hero in the eyes of the public. *Secret Invasion #1-8* (2008-2009).



Hailed as a hero after killing the invading Skrull Queen Veranke, secretly corrupt Norman Osborn was given control of the world's superhuman infrastructure. He consolidated several of his villainous or morally ambiguous allies—Doctor Doom (Victor Von Doom), Namor (McKenzie), Loki (Laufeyson), the Hood (Parker Robbins) and Emma Frost—into the Cabal, a secret ruling council. Osborn dissolved S.H.I.E.L.D. and replaced it with H.A.M.M.E.R., a fascist organization molded in his own image; formed his own team of Avengers, largely composed of unrepentant super villains disguised as established heroes and led by him as the armored Iron Patriot; and created a private team of X-Men, which he used to address mutant issues that could impact him. Osborn callously used his new power to pursue his own vendettas and settle grudges, all the while privately persecuting legitimate heroes and secretly enabling crime. Norman Osborn's dark reign began in *Secret Invasion #8* (2009), and much of it played out in *Secret Invasion: Dark Reign #1* (2009) and *Dark Avengers #1-16* (2009-2010); Osborn's team of X-Men first appeared in *Uncanny X-Men #513* (2009).





While held captive by Doctor Faustus and the Red Skull (Johann Schmidt), Sharon Carter broke Faustus' brainwashing and observed experiments that made her believe that somehow Steve Rogers was alive. When Carter was rescued by the Falcon (Sam Wilson), the Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff) and Captain America (James "Bucky" Barnes), Aleksander Lukin—the body housing the Red Skull's consciousness—was killed; however, the Skull's mind was uploaded to a robotic body similar to one used by his occasional ally Arnim Zola. Sometime later, Carter found the gun she was forced to use to shoot Rogers and learned it did not fire traditional bullets, confirming for her that Rogers was not dead. In actuality, the "bullets" knocked Rogers out of sync with time, causing him to relive key moments of his life. Rogers was then summoned back to the present so the Red Skull could usurp Rogers' revived body. While the Skull's forces battled Rogers' gathered friends on the National Mall, Rogers and the Skull battled within their now-shared mindscape; Cap forced the Skull out, sending him back to his Zola-made body, which was eventually destroyed by Rogers and the superhuman friends he rallied to his side. Later, after witnessing Barnes in action as Captain America, Rogers told him to continue in the role. Sharon Carter's rescue and the transfer of the Red Skull's consciousness took place in *Captain America #42* (2008); Sharon Carter confirmed Steve Rogers was not dead in *Captain America #600* (2009); the Red Skull's defeat and the return of Steve Rogers was recorded in *Captain America: Reborn #1-6* (2009-2010); Rogers told Bucky to continue as Captain America in *Captain America: Who Will Wield the Shield? #1* (2010).



Maddened with power and manipulated by Loki (Laufeyson), Norman Osborn attempted the destruction of Asgard, which was then located over Broxton, Oklahoma, and which Osborn had come to see as a threat. Denied permission to attack Asgard by the U.S. president, Osborn orchestrated a battle between the U-Foes and the Asgardian Volstagg in Chicago as a pretext, then led his private team of Avengers (largely staffed by villains in disguise) and H.A.M.M.E.R. on a full-scale assault of Asgard. Before long, the battle was joined by the true Avengers and other superhumans, now led by the returned Steve Rogers (who temporarily borrowed the Captain America role from James "Bucky" Barnes). During the conflict, Osborn's ally, the schizophrenic Sentry, reverted to his evil Void persona and turned on both friend and foe alike, ravaging Asgard before Thor Odinson apparently slew him. With his forces in shambles, Osborn was defeated and imprisoned by the Avengers; Osborn's secret insanity was laid bare for the world to see when his face, painted as his former villainous Green Goblin persona, was televised. Following these events, Steve Rogers was appointed as commander of the U.S. superhuman forces, and the Superhuman Registration Act was repealed. *Siege #1-4* (2010).



Reunited teammates Thor Odinson, Iron Man (Tony Stark) and Steve Rogers (formerly Captain America) were forced to confront the tension and animosity between them—much of it caused by the Superhuman Registration Act and the superhuman civil war—when the destruction of Asgard resulted in the tangling of multiple realms and dimensions. Forced to work together to prevent the ascension of the Asgardian Goddess of Death, Hela, the three heroes set aside their differences to bring together an army to defeat Hela. *Avengers Prime #1-5* (2010) tells the tale of these three men taking the first steps toward trusting and caring for each other again.





ROGUE LEAVING GAMBIT



Complications continued in the romance between **Rogue and Gambit**: Thinking he could help stop Apocalypse from within, Gambit infiltrated Apocalypse's camp but was not prepared for the brainwashing that accompanied his transformation into the Horseman Death. Sometime later, Apocalypse's work was reversed by mad geneticist Mister Sinister, leaving Gambit in his debt. Simultaneously, when an alien creature threatened to consume all lives on Earth, Rogue used her power to absorb the psyche and powers of anyone she touched to end its threat. Unfortunately, Rogue absorbed the eight billion souls the alien had previously consumed into her own mind, leaving her on the brink of insanity.

Amid this, a mutant baby was born in Alaska, the first since the spell cast by the Scarlet Witch (Wanda Maximoff) that had left mutantkind nearly extinct. The birth provoked a war between forces that wanted the baby: the X-Men, who wanted to protect it; the Purifiers, who wanted to kill it; the Marauders (including the indebted Gambit), who wanted to obtain it for Mister Sinister. All parties remained unaware for a time that the time-traveling Cable (Nathan Summers) had taken the baby into his protection. Additionally, believing the child's death could prevent the dystopian future from which he had come from happening, X-Man Lucas Bishop began maniacally seeking the child, and the mutant-devouring Predator X started hunting the baby to consume it. While trying to safeguard the child, Cyclops sent a duplicate of the Multiple Man (Jamie Madrox) to Bishop's future to learn how mutantkind had survived into those years. Unexpectedly, Madrox's friend Layla Miller accompanied him to the future, became stranded there and was eventually incarcerated in a mutant concentration camp. Desperate to win the war, Cyclops sanctioned X-Force, a strike team that employed lethal methods, to search for the baby and execute the war's other factions. After Mister Sinister took possession of the baby, Rogue's desperate foster mother, Mystique (Raven Darkhölme), pressed the mutant infant's skin against Rogue's, hoping this could cure Rogue of the eight billion souls trapped in her mind. Though Mystique was correct, Rogue was furious that Mystique risked the baby to save her, broadening the already-existing rift between them. Cable reclaimed the infant and teleported into the future. At this moment, Bishop desperately fired at the baby, instead unintentionally striking X-Men founder Charles Xavier in the head. The Acolytes, led by Exodus (Bennet du Paris), kidnapped Xavier's body through telepathic trickery and secretly healed his wounds. Reunited with Gambit at last, Rogue refused to reconnect with him, instead leaving on her own to recover from her traumas. Gambit first became Death in *X-Men #184* (2006) and was returned to normal in *X-Men #200* (2007). Rogue absorbed eight billion minds in *X-Men #199* (2007). The war over the first mutant baby began in *X-Men: Messiah Complex #1* (2007) and concluded in *X-Men #207* (2007). A depiction of Bishop's future can be found in *Bishop: Xavier Security Enforcer #1-3* (1998). Xavier's survival was revealed in *X-Men: Legacy #208* (2008).

After the war, the X-Men disbanded for a time but eventually gathered in California's Bay Area and re-established the school and team's mission there. When corrupt businessman Norman Osborn made moves against mutantkind, including attacking them with his own secretly villainous Avengers and X-Men and supporting anti-mutant legislation, the true X-Men created an artificial island off the coast of California and established a sovereign mutant nation. Utopia was born. The X-Men moved to California in *Uncanny X-Men #500* (2008), and the establishment of Utopia began in *Dark Avengers/Uncanny X-Men: Utopia #1* (2009).







AVENGERS



"NEW" AVENGERS

Following the ousting of Norman Osborn and the repeal of the Superhuman Registration Act, the U.S. government installed Steve Rogers as the director of U.S. superhuman operations and charged him with reorganizing the Avengers. Rogers established multiple Avengers teams, each with a former S.H.I.E.L.D. agent as his liaison—an Avengers Tower-based team supervised by Maria Hill, an Avengers Mansion-based team overseen by Victoria Hand and the covert operations-centered "secret" Avengers directly overseen by Rogers and Sharon Carter. Rogers also established the Avengers Academy, a school headed by Henry Pym and founded to mentor a group of young superhumans previously approached by Norman Osborn as potential recruits for his dark plans. Rogers and Pym hoped Avengers training would guide the students away from a villainous path. This new heroic age for the Avengers began in *Avengers #1-6* (2010), *New Avengers #1-6* (2010) and *Secret Avengers #1-5* (2010). The founding of Avengers Academy took place in *Avengers Academy #1-2* (2010).



"SECRET" AVENGERS



AVENGERS ACADEMY STUDENTS



AVENGERS ACADEMY STAFF

Sometime after a brief war between the Avengers and X-Men, Carol Danvers set aside her Ms. Marvel identity, adopted a new uniform and claimed the Captain Marvel title. She was encouraged to do so by Captain America, inspired by her late friend Mar-Vell and buoyed by memories of her life as Earth's greatest hero in the House of M reality warp. Danvers' time as Captain Marvel in the House of M reality (Earth-58163) was shown in *House of M #1-8* (2005). She first appeared as Captain Marvel in the mainstream Marvel reality (Earth-616) in *Avenging Spider-Man #9-10* (2012) and *Captain Marvel #1* (2012).



The peacekeeping S.H.I.E.L.D. returned after being replaced by H.A.M.M.E.R. during Norman Osborn's dark reign. Serving in this reorganized agency was Marcus Johnson, a soldier who learned longtime S.H.I.E.L.D. Director Nick Fury was his father. After claiming his birth name of Nick Fury Jr., he and his great friend Phil Coulson became agents of good standing. Together they recruited Avengers Hawkeye (Clint Barton) and Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff) to lead a clandestine black-ops team that would have mission intelligence and objectives wiped from their memories after each classified operation. Other agents included seismic-powered Quake (Daisy Johnson) and spy Mockingbird (Bobbi Morse). Maria Hill spearheaded a later roster, which included Spider-Woman (Jessica Drew). The story of Nick Fury and Phil Coulson was told in *Battle Scars #1-6* (2012). The missions of the Secret Avengers began unfolding in *Secret Avengers #1* (2013) and *Secret Avengers #1* (2014).







When a philosophical disagreement over whether their mutant wards should fight in battle fundamentally divided the leadership of the X-Men, the schism exploded in a physical confrontation between Cyclops (Scott Summers) and Wolverine (Logan/James Howlett). This split the team: half staying with Cyclops in California, the other half returning to New York with Wolverine to re-establish a school where mutants could be taught the use of their powers without combat. The breaking of the X-Men took place in *X-Men: Schism #1-5* (2011) and *X-Men: Regenesis #1* (2011) and continued in *Wolverine and the X-Men #1* (2011) and *Uncanny X-Men #1* (2012). Not long after this, a massive worldwide war erupted between the Avengers and the X-Men when the Phoenix Force was detected on a course for Earth. Cyclops believed that the Phoenix Force could be used to reignite mutantkind after the Scarlet Witch (Wanda Maximoff) brought it to the brink of extinction, while the Avengers believed the Phoenix Force posed a vast threat to Earth and should be repelled. When Tony Stark (Iron Man) unintentionally caused the Phoenix Force to split, it took five X-Men as hosts. These Phoenix Five were Cyclops, Emma Frost, Namor (McKenzie), Colossus (Peter Rasputin) and Magik (Illyana Rasputin). The Phoenix Force eventually corrupted Cyclops, who took the Phoenix Force from the other four. During a battle with both the Avengers and the X-Men, the power-mad Cyclops killed Charles Xavier. The Scarlet Witch and the now-teenaged, vastly powerful Hope Summers defeated Cyclops, then Hope dispersed the Phoenix Force, which reignited the mutant gene on Earth, undoing the Scarlet Witch's spell at long last. Cyclops was imprisoned for his actions. *Avengers vs. X-Men #1-12* (2012) and *AvX: Consequences #1-5* (2012-2013).



At the command of arthropod-powered conqueror the Queen (Ana Soria), the deranged Jackal (Miles Warren) infested Manhattan with mutated bedbugs whose bite caused the populace to develop spiderlike powers, transforming the city into a **Spider-Island**. As the infestation spread, these spider-powered individuals started causing chaos across the entire city, prompting Spider-Man (Peter Parker), the Avengers and numerous other heroes to intervene. The infected began to mutate into giant spiders, all under the Queen's mental control. The power she drew from her new subjects transformed her into a gigantic spider-creature. Parker's colleagues at Horizon Labs synthesized a cure, and while the assembled heroes battled the Queen, Spider-Man commandeered millions of tiny robots to administer the cure. Her powers weakened, the Queen was apparently slain in a subsequent battle. *Amazing Spider-Man #666-672* (2011-2012).







Scott Summers (Cyclops) had gone down a dark path by sanctioning a sub-squad of X-Men who were assassins (X-Force), killing Charles Xavier while possessed by the Phoenix Force and becoming a mutant revolutionary after breaking out of jail. Distraught, the Beast (Hank McCoy) traveled back in time to recruit younger versions of the original five X-Men (himself, Cyclops, Angel/Warren Worthington III, Iceman/Bobby Drake and Marvel Girl/Jean Grey) to follow him to the future. Beast hoped they could convince Cyclops his idea of a mutant revolution was wrong and that protecting mutantkind could be accomplished without lethal and bloody methods. Aghast at this future, the time-displaced X-Men stayed to work toward preventing their apparent destiny. X-Force formed in *Uncanny X-Men #493* (2008), and their missions continued in *X-Force #1* (2008). Cyclops killed Xavier in *Avengers vs. X-Men #11* (2012); his mutant revolutionary mission began in *AvX: Consequences #5* (2013). Beast brought the original five X-Men forward in time in *All-New X-Men #1-6* (2013).



X-FORCE



CYCLOPS AS REVOLUTIONARY



Years into a potential future, the robot Ultron took over his creation, the synthezoid Vision, and used him as a time conduit to launch a full-scale surprise invasion of present-day Earth with hundreds of drone replicas. Within days, populations were decimated and subjugated. A giant domed city built on top of New York City served as Ultron's base. Most of Earth's few surviving heroes sheltered in a crashed S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier, hidden by the ingenuity of Tony Stark (Iron Man). Desperate to defeat Ultron, Wolverine (Logan/James Howlett) and the Invisible Woman (Susan Richards) time-traveled to the past and ultimately convinced Avenger and Ultron creator Henry Pym to plant a hidden fail-safe virus in Ultron and forget the task. Pym recorded a video message for Richards to pass on to the future Pym at the moment that Ultron attacked, enabling the fail-safe to deactivate Ultron and stop the invasion, thus diverging the Ultron-controlled timeline to Earth-61112. The Age of Ultron is chronicled in *Age of Ultron #1-10* (2013).